

SUB-CABINET ON SENIOR VITAL LIVING
Meeting Summary Notes
Wednesday, December 12, 2012

Attendees: Gabriel Albornoz, Montgomery County Department of Recreation; Ralph Vines, Consumer Protection Department; Austin Heyman, Office of Community Partnerships; Dave Gottesman and Ian Boyd, County Stats; Leslie Marks, Department of Housing and Community Affairs; Dana Stroman, Montgomery County Police Department; Richie Bowers, Montgomery County Fire Rescue Services; Chris Voss, OEMHS; Patrick Lacefield, Montgomery County Department of Public Information; Judith Welles, Charles Kauffman and Grace Whipple, Commission on Aging; Steve Silverman, Department of Economic Development; Carolyn Biggins, Department of Transportation; Pazit Aviv, Housing Opportunities Commission; Beth Zeidman, Recreation Dept and VLN; Elaine Binder, Senior Fellow-Council; Reemberto Rodriguez, Silver Spring Regional Center; Joe Gonzalez, Office of Human Resources; Mildred Nance, Montgomery County Public Libraries; Pofen Salem and Deborah Lambert, Office of Management Budget; Dr. Jay Kenney and Odile Brunetto, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services/Aging and Disabilities Services

Presentation from Mr. Steve Silverman, Director, Department of Economic Development (DED) on Senior Related Activities:

Montgomery Works' data on 50+ unemployment rates has been consistent in the past few years, as evaluated by Montgomery Works with 26% of callers/visitors who are 50+.

DED recently sent a survey to the 200 employers in the County. The study was completed this summer 2012 and yielded:

- Montgomery County employers have positive attitude and want to hire older workers and are open to initiatives/suggestions.
- AARP has list of 10 best employers and 8 out of 10 are health care related.
- Montgomery County employers know of upcoming retirements waves and are planning for that.
- Experienced nurses of retirement age are offered to move into community outreach type of positions which are less physically demanding, and employers provide cross training and partner with Montgomery College.
- Best practices with older adult workers were sought

DED is planning to develop an annual award, for businesses with over 50 employees, and who are friendly to older workers. Work-life balance for caregivers who are working will also be included.

DED is also reviewing other jurisdictions for best practices. Large companies in the County have conducted HR cost analysis for lost opportunities etc. of older employees. Also many older workers delete retirement because of the economy in Montgomery County. A reminder that in our County, 96% of businesses have 49 or less employees and 2/3 of businesses have less than 5 employees.

The JCA job fair annually is well attended by thousands of people. This is an output measure versus an outcome measure for attendees getting hired. The replacement of retirees by newer workforce is also the focus of large employers with cross training before the seasoned employee departs. While the creation of Part Time positions can be easier for older workers at times, it can be more expensive for companies. Currently, 4.7% is our current unemployment rate in Montgomery County and 2% is normal for Montgomery County.

The Senior Sub-Cabinet can help with suggesting the new awards selection criteria, as the goal is to conduct a Spring 2013 event. In term of unemployed Older Workers, there is a need to prioritize those from recent layoffs, and those who have been unemployed for long period of time and seek retraining with Montgomery College or other appropriate organization. The job growth this year will focus on Health Care with Holy Cross construction of a second hospital in Germantown and the creation of an expected 1,000 new positions.

Report by Mr. Gabriel Albornoz, Director, Recreation Department and Co-Chair Senior Subcabinet, about Mr. Leggett's Diversity Summit held in November:

Several goals of the event included the review of best practices on reaching out to diverse groups, plus the discussion of the demographics and services implications for the County Government. The participants reviewed actual case studies in the County and learned from multiple presenters. Members of the diversity steering committee facilitated small groups' discussions with the main focus being: How can the County Government be responsive? The steering committee will draft recommendations for Mr. Leggett's review. One of them will focus on developing benchmarks for departments with County Stats for annual reviews.

The next steps include in January 2013, a meeting with CountyStats and the Diversity Steering Committee to identify data sets for open data platforms and link to other data sources such as ACS. The new CountyStats Director, Dave Gottesman, was introduced and he shared his experience with "Project Independence" in Nassau County, a New York Community for 5 years.

The use of census tracts in several towns, with identified NORCs, created 7 service regions for seniors programs, each of the 7 with their own steering committee. It was recommended that a presentation to the Senior Subcabinet on the Nassau County (which borders New York City) project be made to the Senior Subcabinet in 2013. Mr. Albornoz also commented on a recent experience with the Vietnamese Senior Programs, where language and cultural barriers contributed to a conflict.

As for additional activities of the Diversity Summit, in the future, additional participants may include representatives from MNPPC, MCPS, and HOC.

Updates from Commission on Aging (COA) Chair Judith Welles on the Council Resolution on the Senior Agenda

- The Senior Subcabinet has been engaged for several months with the Senior Agenda drafted by the COA
- The County Executive endorsed it in May 2012 and proposed a resolution to the County Council

- The HHS Committee of the Council held a hearing in November on the Senior Agenda. Council staff then prepared a resolution which was adopted by the full Council on December 4, 2012.
- The elements of the Senior Agenda focus on preparing Montgomery County to become a Community for a Lifetime
- State legislation on Community for a Lifetime was passed by the General Assembly two years ago. The work in the County could be a model for the State

Issues to keep in mind include: a) Impact on programs due to changing needs of older adults and innovations, b) Annual budget review, as 1 out of 4 will be age 60+ by 2020.

The COA shared its FY14 priorities with Mr. Leggett, and with the Council for their consideration. The COA also briefed our Annapolis delegation recently; the members who attended were also very supportive of the Senior Agenda. On February 11, 2013 the COA will hold its annual Stakeholders meeting. This year there will be a panel with 4 presenters. Gabriel Alborno, Carolyn Biggins, Rick Nelson and Uma Ahluwalia have been invited to present about the County current planning efforts regarding the Senior Agenda.

The Council Resolution on the Senior Agenda is a valuable tool for the Senior Subcabinet in developing FY14 initiatives. The framework is helpful to connect the dots for a community for a lifetime. The issues of monitoring and making progress on the senior agenda and the oversight are noted as outcome measures for senior initiatives included in the Council Resolution. The Council HHS and Transportation Committees will have a joint February meeting in 2013 on senior transportation.

Senior Safety Summit, December 11, 2012 held at the White Oak Recreation Center (feedback from multiple participants)

Excellent presenters from several Departments reached an audience who needed all the information. This was a rescheduled event due to Storm Sandy. While it could have had a larger audience, there was very good collaboration and Mr. Leggett attended.

Additional information

- An upcoming annual event planned by the City of Gaithersburg will be held in May 2013: “Aging Sensationally and Safely” at the Activity Center at Bohrer Park Community Center. Last year, over 600 participants attended.
- The County needs a “travelling road show” on Senior Safety. We also need to address the transportation needs of seniors who miss the all day free Ride-On rides and cannot attend events.
- The Police Department free movie with seniors continues for 200-400 seniors monthly in Bethesda with a safety discussion before the movie.
- MVA does conduct road tests for older drivers who are no longer safe on the road. The Police Department can refer these drivers to MVA for an evaluation.
- An Older Driver Safety Event is being planned on May 19 in Silver Spring with MVA, Police Department, COA and HHS.

Report from Leslie Marks about the Senior Housing planning project with Partners for Livable Communities (PLC) and funded by Metlife

- The group researched 6 communities in the country that have created affordable Assisted Living Facilities (ALF) for best practice.
- The group visited Baltimore Stadium Place with 380 affordable independent senior units and 46 Green House nursing home beds.
- The Green House model is a philosophy that includes the active involvement and participation of residents and staff in decision making and program operation; it is a person centered approach. In addition, the building is designed as a home not as an institution.

Unfortunately, the Maryland Medicaid Waiver for Older Adults does not have a project based component, which is the key to affordable ALFs. The County needs to work with DHMH on this issue.

The Support and Services at Home (SASH) program funded by federal grants is now in 8 states and combines senior housing with services. Leslie visited the pilot in Vermont: 100 people are in a group with a multidisciplinary team of staff who deliver home services. The team meets as a group twice a month. The cost is \$700/month.

For each new person served, there is a 2 hour intake process and the team develops a plan for each person. It was noted that volunteer bus drivers provide the transportation for seniors in the Vermont SASH program.

Leslie is involved in planning a Senior Housing session for the County Affordable Housing Conference in May 2013. There will be 2 hours from 3-5pm that day dedicated to affordable senior housing development. In order to prepare for this, in March 2013 a focus group will convene to build an action plan. The group will also learn about the approved Silver Spring housing project with the new library and 140 new units.

Report from the Civic/Social Engagement Work Group:

Representatives from “ReServe Maryland” met recently with the group. The cost to employers for an experienced older part time employee is \$15/hour, and the older part-time worker is paid \$10/hour. ReServe is trying to expand into the County. The Village Movement continues to spread in the County. There is a need for a coordinator as well as a need to help create Villages in less affluent areas of the County.

Report from the Community and Outreach WorkGroup

- 311 staff conducted outreach to seniors via the Beacon and through Senior Center presentations
- A new project of producing 8 videos about senior services is still of interest
- There is need for more funding to increase communication with seniors and caregivers

Report from Safety WorkGroup

- A new Emergency Senior Preparedness brochure has been developed and printed with Federal grant funds.

Report from Health and Wellness Workgroup

- The County Executive made a specific request to the Recreation Department for enhancements at senior centers and senior neighborhood programs.
- Personal Physical Trainers for seniors may be considered.
- Beth Zeidman is conducting due diligence for this proposal to the County Executive
- The Workgroup conducted its third annual Falls Prevention Campaign in September. The number of partnering agencies involved and thus numbers of seniors involved continue to grow. The workgroup members participated in a demonstration of telemedicine to assess falls risks. This is provided at no cost to seniors by Holy Cross Hospital in their Silver Spring Senior Source location with grant funds. It is unclear currently if telemedicine is reimbursed by health insurance companies.
- The workgroup will meet mid-January 2013 for a presentation regarding ACA implementation in Maryland and its impact on seniors, especially for those who have both Medicaid and Medicare.

Report from the Transportation WorkGroup

Joy Barrow, Chief of Senior Transportation is retiring. Kathy Healy is stepping in part-time on a temporary basis.

- The Call N Ride program is changing to a Debit Card system
- The group is reviewing the feasibility of a pilot project on a Demand Response Service utilizing unused capacity from Medicaid trips providers.
- The certification/recertification for Call N Ride will soon be contracted out. It is hoped that the savings can be redeployed.

Report from the Home and Community Based Services WorkGroup

New committee members are focusing on the partnership with Asbury Methodist Village to assist more seniors in the greater Gaithersburg area to age in the community. The next meeting of the group is tomorrow. Several Villages leaders met recently at JCA with JCA's staff facilitating.

The next meeting of the Senior Subcabinet is scheduled for March 27, 2013 1-2:30pm